

The Art & Design Building

Location George Mason University
Fairfax, Virginia

Category Institutional

The Art & Design Building replaces the University's outdated fine arts facility with a three-story, warehouse-style structure adjacent to a new quadrangle on the campus. Flexibility is built into the architecture of the 88,900 square-foot building to accommodate changes in teaching methods and curriculum. Modular floor plans and varied light sources allow perimeter studio spaces for painting/drawing, digital arts, graphic design, sculpture, photography, print-making and interdisciplinary arts to be reconfigured in the future. A 75-seat lecture hall and a gallery for displaying student work occupy spaces next to the main staircase and entrance for easy public access. Art education, general classrooms, and lounges are located throughout the building to encourage interaction among students. The building also incorporates separate graduate studios and administrative and faculty offices.

Program Classrooms, Art Studios, Offices,
Lounge Areas, Lecture Hall, Art Gallery

Gross SF 88,900 GSF

Cost \$27,200,000







EAST ELEVATION

THE BUILDING AS A **CANVAS**

How Can A Building Inspire New Possibilities For Creating Art?

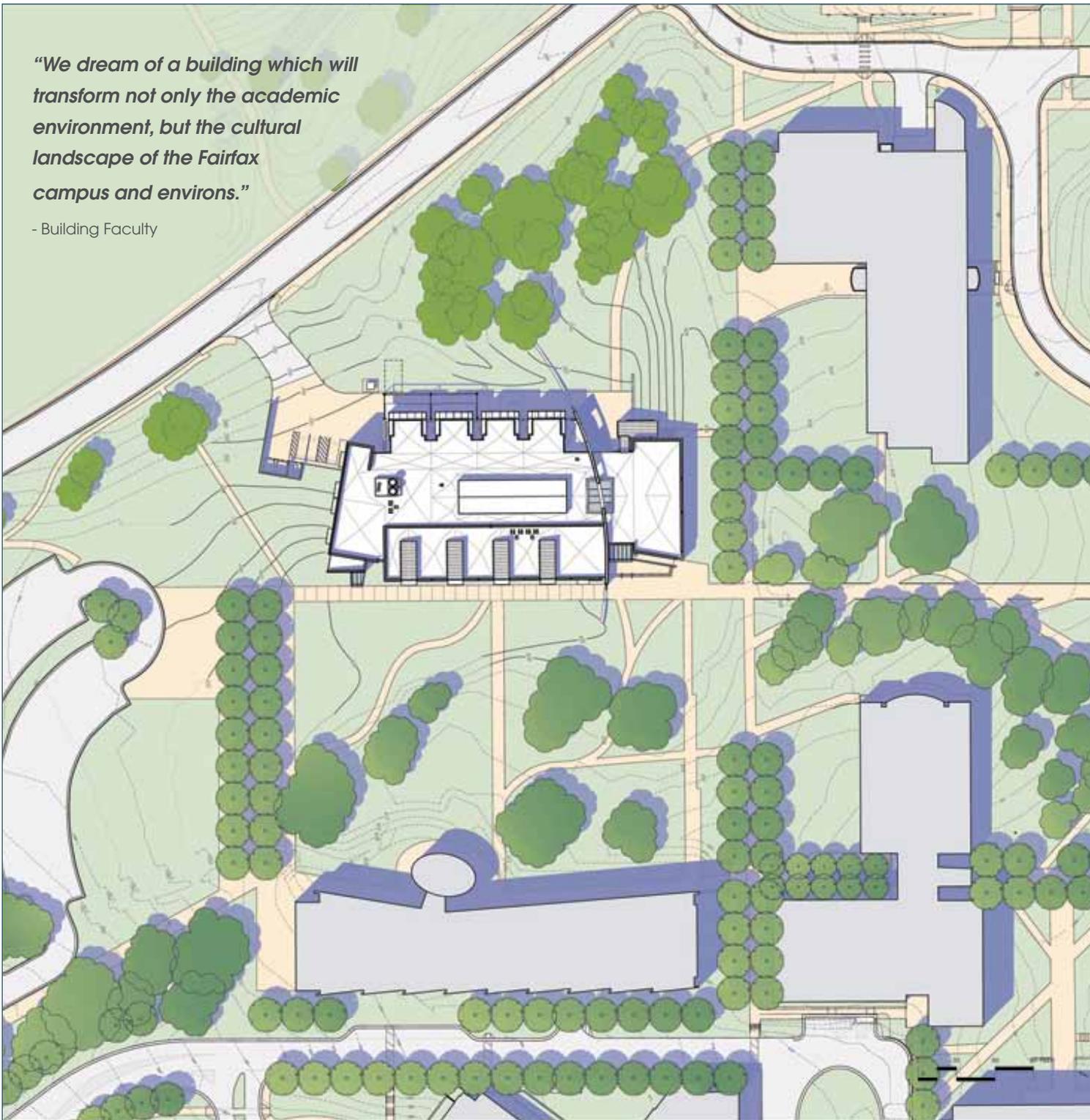
TRANSFORM

EXHIBIT

DETAIL

"We dream of a building which will transform not only the academic environment, but the cultural landscape of the Fairfax campus and environs."

- Building Faculty



CREATIVE QUADRANGLE

The Art & Design Building is the final piece defining a new campus quadrangle including research and engineering buildings. The newly dubbed Creative Quadrangle has begun to sponsor cross disciplinary collaboration.



AERIAL VIEW / UNDER CONSTRUCTION



NORTH EDGE OF EXISTING SITE



FLEXIBLE PLAN

Steel-framed, 36 foot square bays allow partitions between studios at the building's perimeter to be removed so that the spaces may be reconfigured.





UNLIMITED POTENTIAL

Each studio is designed as a simple, unadorned space to facilitate various teaching methods. The drawing studio, at left, exemplifies the various sources of illumination in each room, including a north-facing light monitor and adjustable track lighting.



ABOVE: ADJUSTABLE EXHAUST HOODS IN PRINT-MAKING STUDIO

LEFT: FLEXIBILITY OF NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING IN DRAWING STUDIO

“Once we started using the space we realized we had to step up our teaching. We had to be better, do better, to live up to it’s potential.”

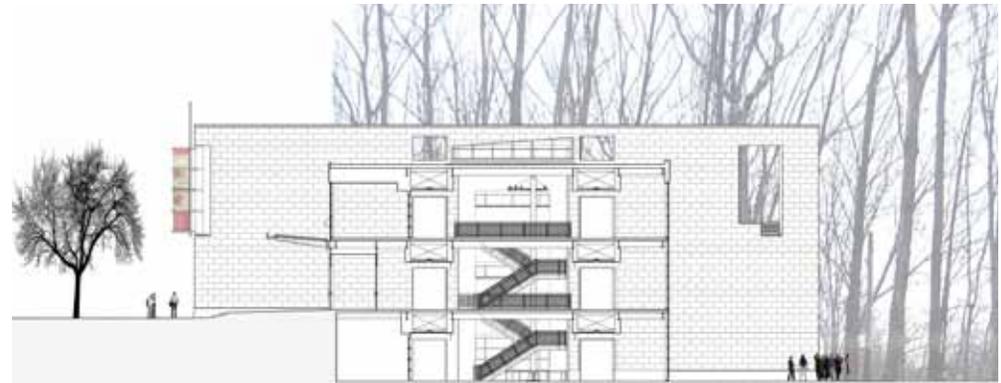
- University Faculty



TRANSITIONAL DOORS AND MOVEABLE FURNITURE IN DIGITAL STUDIO



THE STAIR'S MID-LEVEL LANDING HAS BEEN USED AS AN ELEVATED PODIUM FOR LECTURES



CONNECTIONS AND COMMUNITY

The central stair and curved metal wall slices through the plan seemingly separating the studio proper where most of the art is made from the more public areas where art is displayed. In fact it unifies the disciplines and becomes a place where art can be exhibited - perhaps hanging on the vertical wall or fastened to the wire mesh rails.

EXHIBIT

TRANSFORM



THE INTERIOR AS A CANVAS

Linear lighting evenly illuminates art displays on corridor walls (bottom right). The public art gallery (bottom left) can be subdivided with partitions for various exhibitions. Next to the central staircase, the open space between studios is used as a student lounge and experimental gallery with a projector for displaying digital art (top left).



EXHIBIT

TRANSFORM



LOFT-LIKE SPACES AND LARGE, SOUTH-FACING WINDOWS IN THE GRADUATE STUDIOS PROVIDE BACKDROPS FOR ART AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVITY TO EMERGE.



THE EXTERIOR AS A CANVAS

An exterior stair is designed to be demountable. In the event of a future addition it can be removed and reassembled. It also serves as a frame for mounting art.



MUTED TONES RENDER THE BUILDING AS A BACKDROP



ABOVE: GRAPHIC DISPLAY OPPORTUNITY AT NORTHEAST CORNER ENTRY FROM THE QUAD

LEFT: FACULTY LOUNGE WITH VIEWS TO THE NORTH THROUGH THE METAL WALL

THE IMPORTANCE OF CRAFT

Industrial materials and muted colors allow exterior and interior displays of art to stand out. Attention to architectural details reflect the importance of craft within the art community.



SUNSCREENS SHADE EXPANSIVE CURTAIN WALL



STEEL CANOPIES MARK THE ENTRANCES



SOUTHEAST STAIR OPENS ONTO THE QUAD

THE IMPORTANCE OF CRAFT

The design of the building is shaped by the role it plays to inspire the creation of art. The architecture attempts to blur the distinction between the building as a canvas for art and the creation of art within.



ABOVE: TYPICAL BAY - EAST ELEVATION
LEFT: TYPICAL BAY - WEST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION



NORTHEAST CORNER



WEST ELEVATION